



Australian Government  
Department of Education,  
Skills and Employment

# **Trades Recognition Australia Migration Points Advice Applicant Guidelines**

March 2020

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# The Migration Points Advice Program

## Section 1 Program Information

### 1.1 Introduction to Trades Recognition Australia

Trades Recognition Australia (TRA) is a business unit located within the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. It is the relevant skills assessing authority for nominated occupations under the *Migration Regulations 1994*.

TRA skills assessments are intended to ensure that a successful applicant is able to perform at the required skill level for their nominated occupation. The skills assessments also provide an assurance to government and to the individual that their training and experience is relevant and appropriate for the Australian labour market.

TRA operates a number of different skills assessment services which are based on an applicant's occupation, country of passport, where they studied and the type of visa they are seeking.

### 1.2 Program objective

The Migration Points Advice Program (MPA) is a documentary based skills assessment of an applicant's qualification/s and employment history to determine comparability with Australian standards for a skilled worker in the nominated occupation. The objective is to ensure successful applicants can contribute to Australia's skilled workforce.

The standards against which qualifications and employment are assessed as follows:

- AQF qualifications relevant to the occupation from an Australian industry endorsed training package (available at [www.training.gov.au](http://www.training.gov.au))
- Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) (available at [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au))

The Migration Points Advice service is for people with a successful Trades Recognition Australia (TRA) skills assessment outcome and are applying to the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs) for a points tested, independent skilled migration visa.

### 1.3 Applicant Guidelines

These Guidelines describe the MPA program and outline the eligibility requirements in applying for points advice under the MPA program.

You must read the eligibility requirements before starting an application. If you do not understand any part of the eligibility requirements, please contact TRA at [traenquiries@dese.gov.au](mailto:traenquiries@dese.gov.au).

Before submitting your application, you must check with Home Affairs ([www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au)) to ensure you require points advice and that TRA is the correct assessing authority for your nominated occupation.

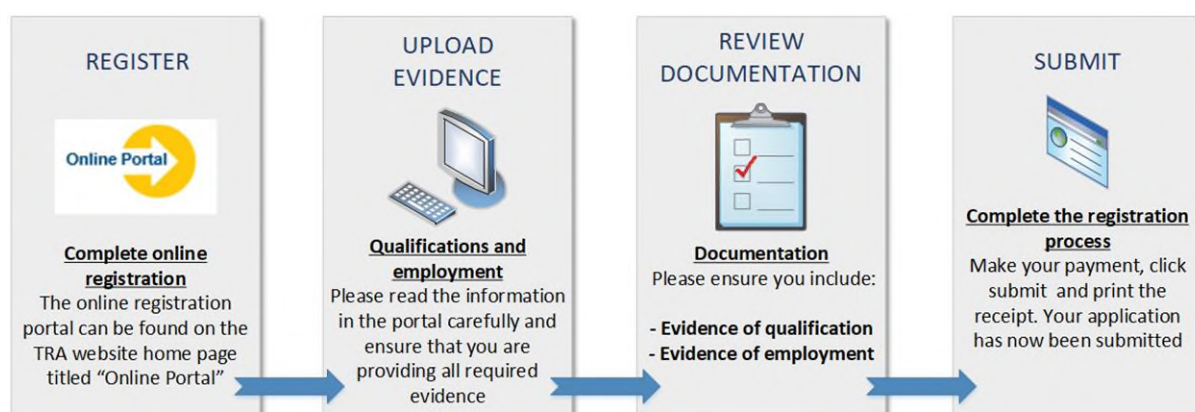
TRA does not issue points or provide specific information on migration or visa requirements. All enquiries relating to visa and migration requirements must be directed to [Home Affairs](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au).

TRA reserves the right to amend these Guidelines as necessary. Information about changes will be included in the Change History Table in Section 5 and posted as a news item on the TRA webpage.

## 1.4 How to apply

To apply for the program you must register through the TRA [Online Portal](http://www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au) via the TRA website [www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au](http://www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au). You will be asked to create a username and password. Diagram 1 below provides an overview of the online application process.

**Diagram 1 – MPA application process**



An application can only be lodged online in the [TRA Online Portal](http://www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au). From 18 March 2020 onwards, application documents emailed to TRA will not be accepted or processed.

All applications submitted to TRA must be decision ready. Decision ready means all the mandatory fields in the [TRA Online Portal](http://www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au) are completed, all documents uploaded as required under Section 2 of these Guidelines, and the mandatory application fee is paid.

### 1.4.1 Document requirements

Section 2 of the Guidelines provides a detailed overview of the program requirements and processes. Please note that if your application is not complete and decision ready, your qualifications or periods of employment may not be recognised. It is your and /or your agent's responsibility to make sure the application is decision ready.

Please ensure you have colour scans of:

- passport identification page
- qualification/s
- academic transcripts for each qualification

- a completed *Employer Template* for each employment period claimed
- pay evidence for each period of employment claimed
- evidence of self-employment (if applicable)

Your documents must be scanned in full colour as a .pdf and the quality must be at least 150 dots per inch (dpi). The total maximum file size for each document must not exceed 10mb.

Please note, TRA cannot accept documents that are sent through file sharing platforms, such as Google Drive, dropbox etc, and your application should not contain documents that are locked or password protected.

Please read the instructions in the TRA Online Portal carefully to make sure you have met all requirements before submitting your documents.

### 1.4.2 Documents not in English

If your application documents are not in English, you must also provide an English translation of the documents.

- ***Translating documents in Australia***

Acceptable translations of documents in Australia can be obtained from translators accredited with the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). A list of approved translators can be found on NAATI's website [www.naati.com.au](http://www.naati.com.au). Translations must include the translator's name, NAATI identification number and accreditation status.

Please check the translator's accreditation by either calling NAATI on +61 2 6260 3035 or asking to see the translator's letter or certificate of accreditation in the language you need.

- ***Translating documents outside Australia***

If you have documents translated outside Australia, the translator must be approved by the authorities in the country where the translation is made. Contact your nearest Australian Embassy, High Commission or Consulate for advice if you are unsure of the process.

Overseas translations must be on the organisation's letterhead and include an official stamp. The translator's name (all in block letters), signature and contact telephone number must be legibly printed below the signature. This information is required so that TRA can contact the translator if necessary to verify the translated documents.

## 1.5 Fees

Service	Fee
Migration Points Advice based on a TRA Migration Skills Assessment or a skills assessment from another TRA program	\$600
Migration Points Advice Review	\$300

Payment must be made when you complete the online application and may only be made using a Visa or MasterCard credit/debit card through the online portal. All fees are payable in Australian dollars and instructions on how to pay are provided online when you apply.

After payment, a printable receipt will be displayed and a copy will be sent to the email address nominated in your application. Please retain the email receipt as evidence of payment.

### **1.5.1. Fee refunds**

Refunds will not be provided should you choose to withdraw your application.

The circumstances in which TRA will refund a payment are detailed in the *TRA Payment and Refund Policy* under Forms & Policy on the TRA website [www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au](http://www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au).

## **Section 2 Program Requirements and Processes**

### **2.1 Eligibility**

You are eligible to apply for the MPA program if you:

- have a successful skills assessment outcome from a TRA program, in your nominated occupation

### **2.2 Qualifications**

#### **2.2.1 Australian Qualifications Framework**

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single, comprehensive, national qualifications framework. TRA will determine whether your qualification is comparable to the relevant AQF qualification and level for your nominated occupation.

The relevant AQF qualification for specific occupations assessed by TRA can be found on the [Australian Qualifications by Occupation](#) document on the Frequently Asked Questions page of the TRA website.

#### **2.2.2 Qualification documents**

Your application must include evidence of formal training and outcomes that can be considered comparable to the AQF qualification for your nominated occupation. The following documents must therefore be uploaded with your online application:

- final qualification/s or apprenticeship certificate/s or award/s
- a full academic transcript or other documents that include the start and end date of your training and details of the program of study
- apprenticeship documents such as the contract of apprenticeship, journal or any other relevant document from your employer, governing body or training institution relating to your apprenticeship (if applicable).



The following items will not be accepted as a substitute for a qualification:

- occupational licences
- trade tests not supported by comparable and verifiable formal training
- short course certificates such as single day or single subject training
- work experience

If you have been assessed by a TRA-approved Registered Training Organisation (RTO), you must provide the Australian qualification or Offshore Technical Skills Record issued to you by the RTO, including your transcript and any other correspondence such as your skills assessment outcome.

### **2.2.3 Qualification verification and assessment**

When assessing and verifying your qualification TRA considers quality, level and relevance as outlined below.

- ***Quality***

Your qualification/s must be nationally recognised in the country of issue. TRA will use various assessment sources to verify your training was accredited and regulated by the appropriate governing body in the country of issue.

- ***Level***

Australian qualifications are awarded at different levels on the AQF, therefore TRA must be able to determine that your qualification is comparable to the relevant AQF qualification and level for your nominated occupation. TRA uses various internal and external assessment sources to determine the comparable level of your qualification.

- ***Relevance***

TRA compares the content of your training (transcripts, syllabus etc.) to the relevant AQF qualification level to ensure your training is directly relevant to your nominated occupation. If TRA is unable to verify your qualification/s meet all of the requirements, TRA will not be able to confirm you hold a qualification that is comparable to the AQF qualification for your nominated occupation. You may be contacted to provide additional evidence, or asked to obtain verification of the qualification from the training institution or authority that issued the qualification. The training institute or authority will need to provide the verification in electronic format directly to TRA. Please note the provision of a document or other information does not guarantee that your qualification will be recognised.

## **2.3 Employment**

### **2.3.1 Tasks and duties**

TRA refers to the Australian New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) to compare the tasks and skills undertaken in your employment experience with those expected in your nominated occupation in Australia. The ANZSCO is a skills-based classification system used to classify all occupations and jobs in the Australian and New Zealand labour markets.

### **2.3.2 Employment with an employer**

An *Employer Template* must be completed for each employment arrangement you wish to claim in support of your application. For example, if you have employment arrangements for two employers, you are required to provide two *Employment Template*. The template/s must be completed by your employer or manager, and include contact details that allow TRA to confirm the business exists and operates as claimed.

TRA must be able to confirm the contact information provided in the *Employer Template* is linked to the business. TRA must also be able to confirm the business functions in a way that supports the duties and tasks you undertake in your nominated occupation.

Tasks and duties listed in the *Employer Templates* must not be copied from external sources such as ANZSCO or other third party sources.

The *Employer Template* can be downloaded from the online portal and on the [Migration Points Advice](#) page of the TRA website.

### **2.3.3 Self Employment**

If you are self-employed, you must select “*Self-Employment*” option in the employment type field in the TRA Online Portal. You must complete this section for each period of self-employment you are claiming. TRA must be able to confirm the contact information provided in your application is linked to the business. The business must be able to be verified as functioning in a way that supports the duties and tasks you undertake in your nominated occupation.

Tasks and duties listed in your application must not be copied from external sources such as ANZSCO or other third party sources.

### **2.3.4 Employment time periods**

The employment evidence you are required to provide is based on how you obtained your qualification i.e. awarded internationally, in Australia through a course of study, or through a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process.

If you obtained your qualification overseas, or by study in Australia, only employment undertaken after the award date of your qualification is considered. TRA will not consider employment that is more than ten years old.

If your qualification was awarded through RPL, employment undertaken prior to the awarding of your RPL qualification will be considered, however, the first three years of eligible employment will be not be recognised as this is considered to be an informal training period.

### **2.3.5 Paid employment**

TRA considers full-time employment as ongoing employment working the required number of hours considered full-time in the country where the employment was undertaken. Fair Work Australia considers full-time employment in Australia as 38 hours per week, unless a particular industrial award specifies otherwise.

Employment completed on a part-time basis will be considered on a pro-rata basis. For example, an applicant who has completed 20 hours of employment per week over a 2 year period will be considered to have completed 12 months of full time paid employment.

TRA may also compare the amount you are paid with award rates or other similar instruments to verify claimed employment is at the required skill level.

### 2.3.6 Pay evidence

You are required to provide pay evidence to support your employment claims. The requirements for pay evidence may vary depending on the type of employment undertaken, and these are specified in the table below. Please note TRA may request additional evidence if your claims cannot be verified.

You are required to upload full colour scans of documentary pay evidence.

Employment Type	Pay Evidence Required
Employment <b>not</b> completed in Australia (excluding self-employment)	<p>Sets of documents for each year of employment claimed from at least <b>two</b> of the categories below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• official government tax records or documents that may include payment summaries, group certificates or notices of assessment</li> <li>• three payslips citing names of the employer and employee</li> <li>• superannuation documents citing the names of the applicant and employer</li> <li>• bank statements with the employer's name and clearly showing income has been deposited.</li> </ul>
Employment completed in Australia (excluding self-employment)	<p>PAYG Payment Summaries and Notices of Assessment.</p> <p>If you wish to claim employment for the current financial year, you must provide 3 payslips from the current financial year citing the name of the employee and employer.</p> <p>You can request a copy of your payment summary information statement from the ATO by completing the copies of tax documents request form found here:  <a href="https://www.ato.gov.au/forms/copies-of-tax-documents-request---individuals/">https://www.ato.gov.au/forms/copies-of-tax-documents-request---individuals/</a></p> <p><b>And</b></p> <p>Superannuation documents citing the names of the applicant and employer</p>
Self-Employment <b>not</b> undertaken in Australia	<p>For each year of self-employment you need to provide evidence that clearly demonstrates the business is /was fully operational for the period of employment being claimed. The following lists the type evidence that can be submitted for a self-employment arrangement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• business registration documents</li> <li>• relevant trade or business licences</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• annual business returns</li> <li>• Invoices to clients and invoices from suppliers</li> <li>• bank statements showing income and expenses</li> <li>• statement from a registered/certified accountant if applicable</li> <li>• taxation documents citing the name of the business</li> </ul>
Self-Employment in Australia	<p>For each year of self-employment you need to provide evidence that clearly demonstrates the business is /was fully operational for the period of employment being claimed. The following lists the type evidence that can be submitted for a self-employment arrangement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your Australian Business Number (ABN)</li> <li>• financial statements</li> <li>• invoices to clients and/or from suppliers</li> <li>• bank statements showing income and expenses</li> <li>• Business Activity Statement/s(BAS)</li> <li>• Income Tax returns (including Business Schedule)</li> <li>• Notice of Assessment</li> <li>• statement from a registered/certified accountant if applicable</li> </ul>

## 2.4 Assessment outcome

You will receive notification of the outcome of your MPA application by email following the assessment and verification process.

MPA applications are generally finalised within 120 days from your online submission. Processing time may vary and are dependent on the volume of applications received and the complexity of the verification processes. In some cases, the processing time is extended due to the time taken by external sources to respond to our request for verification.

Applicants are requested to allow sufficient time for assessment as visa deadlines are not a reason for expedition of an application.

A news item will be published on the TRA website if there is an increase to estimated timeframes.

## 2.5 Review

If you disagree with the outcome of your assessment, you have 90 days from the date of your assessment outcome to apply for a review. A review will only consider information submitted in your original application. Any additional evidence to support your application must be submitted in a new application. Your Points Advice letter will contain information about how to apply for your review.

Please note, a review will only be conducted if you believe TRA has incorrectly assessed the information you supplied in your original application. You cannot provide any additional evidence to support your original application, nor can you ask TRA to consider factors not set out in your original application.

If you wish to supply additional evidence or wish to ask TRA to consider other factors, you must apply for a new assessment. In submitting a new application, you must resubmit all evidence previously supplied and include any additional evidence you wish to claim.

## **Section 3 Program Administration**

### **3.1 Roles and responsibilities**

TRA is responsible for:

- ensuring the objectives of the MPA program are met (see page 4)
- providing up-to-date information about program processes and procedures
- responding to enquiries about the program
- developing policy and providing program advice
- developing and maintaining an appropriate IT system to support the program
- liaising with the Department of Home Affairs and relevant stakeholders about the program
- accepting program payments from applicants
- managing evaluations of the program
- undertaking compliance and investigative measures as required.

### **3.2 Applicant roles and responsibilities**

As an applicant to the MPA program you must:

- accurately and honestly complete the required skills assessment application and declaration requirements
- provide authentic and current evidence to TRA to enable the skills assessment to be conducted
- ensure the application submitted to TRA is complete and decision ready. Decision ready means all the mandatory fields in the [TRA Online Portal](#) are completed, all documents uploaded and you have paid the required skills assessment fees.

### **3.3 Use of agents or representatives**

TRA will not correspond with, or speak to, another person on your behalf about your assessment without your written approval.

You may nominate a migration agent or representative to act on your behalf during the skills assessment process. You may do this by completing the 'Agent or Representative' section of the online application form.

*A Nomination of a Migration Agent or Representative* form must be completed and submitted to TRA if you change a migration agent or representative. Information provided on the form will replace any previous migration agent or representative details held on your TRA file. This form is located *under Forms & Policy* on the TRA website

<https://www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au/forms-policy>. You can email the completed form to [traenquiries@dese.gov.au](mailto:traenquiries@dese.gov.au).

For more information about the use of migration agents in Australia, visit the Department of Home Affairs website <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Visa/Usin>

### 3.4 Privacy

The collection, use and disclosure of personal information by TRA is subject to the *Privacy Act 1988* (Privacy Act). Schedule 1 of the Privacy Act contains the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs), which prescribe the rules for handling personal information.

The Privacy Act defines ‘personal information’ as:

*‘information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:*

- (a) whether the information or opinion is true or not; and*
- (b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not’.*

#### 3.4.1 Privacy information

Under the Australian Privacy Principles, the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (Department) is required to have a clearly expressed and up to date policy about the way the Department manages personal information. This policy contains information about how you may access the personal information the Department holds about you, and how you may correct any inaccuracies in that information. We will correct your personal information if it is inaccurate (subject to restrictions on such access/alteration of records under the applicable provisions of any law of the Commonwealth).

It also includes information as to how you may make a complaint about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles, and how the Department will respond to such a complaint.

A copy of the Department’s privacy policy is available on the Department’s website at <https://www.dese.gov.au/privacy>.

More information about the Privacy Act, including a copy of the full text of the APPs, can be obtained from the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner’s website at [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au).

#### 3.4.2 Collection

TRA collects personal information from you for the purposes of:

- processing and assessing your application for a skills assessment or review, under any of the TRA programs as the relevant assessing authority for skilled occupations specified in Instruments made under the *Migration Regulations 1994*
- confirming authorisation by an applicant of his or her representative or migration agent, and to provide details to that representative or migration agent
- allowing you to make a payment of fees to TRA so you can lodge an application

- allowing TRA to confirm payment and process refunds as applicable
- conducting investigations and ensuring compliance with relevant laws, awards or standards
- ensuring compliance with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines (2011) through the investigation of fraud and implementation of fraud prevention strategies.

### 3.4.3 Disclosure

TRA may give some or all of the information it collects from you or third parties to Home Affairs, the Migration Review Tribunal, the Australian Federal Police, your employer/s, your supervisor/s, your nominated agent or representative, the organisations that issued your qualifications, TRA-approved registered training organisations, agencies providing advice to TRA on qualifications, the Australian Skills Quality Authority, the Reserve Bank of Australia, contractors, the Fair Work Ombudsman and other Australian and state/territory government agencies.

TRA may disclose your personal information to these entities for the reasons that are listed above in the collection section.

Personal information collected by TRA will not be disclosed to any other third party without your consent, except where authorised or required by law.

## 3.5 False or misleading information

You are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and validity of all information provided to TRA.

TRA will take reasonable steps to verify the validity of all information supplied throughout the MPA skills assessment. However, if TRA determines at a later date that information previously supplied is false, misleading, non-factual or simply incorrect, and that in reliance on that information TRA has incorrectly assessed an application as successful, TRA may write to you to advise the assessment is no longer considered successful. TRA will advise Home Affairs accordingly.

TRA may refer such matters to the appropriate authorities for investigation where information provided to support an application is known or believed to be false.

**Note:** Penalties apply under the *Crimes Act 1914* and the *Criminal Code Act 1995* may apply for making false or misleading statements and providing false or misleading information or documents.

## 3.6 Relevant legislation

TRA is the designated relevant assessing authority for a range of trade and associate professional occupations under the [Migration Regulations 1994](#).

Under Subregulation 2.26B (2) of the *Migration Regulations 1994*, TRA sets the standards against which a person's skills are assessed.

### 3.7 Complaints

Complaints about breaches of privacy should be referred to:

Privacy Officer

Legal Services

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

GPO Box 9880

CANBERRA ACT 2601

AUSTRALIA

Email: [privacy@dese.gov.au](mailto:privacy@dese.gov.au)

## Section 4 Contact Details

Email [traenquiries@dese.gov.au](mailto:traenquiries@dese.gov.au)

Web [www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au](http://www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au)

## Section 5 Document change history

Version	Date published	Summary of change	Authorised by
1.0	March 2020	Changes reflect the new online application process and employment evidence requirements.	Ms Belinda Campbell Assistant Secretary, Tuition Assurance Taskforce and Trades Recognition Australia